W1TKZ

The Spark Gap

DECEMBER 1984

Book IX Vol XII

Official Journal of the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society

STATION ACTIVITIES

by Nels Anderson, K1UR

On the weekend of November 17-18 the call W1TKZ was once again heard on the HF bands as the ARRL's annual Phone Sweepstakes contest commenced. Although our club does not operate many HF contests, this one has become a tradition and though we have never gone out for the big score our presence was known on the air once again this year.

Since we lost our trap dipole to the weather some weeks ago, we started with no antennas. A Field Day-type antenna operation was called for and performed starting at noon Saturday. By the time the contest began at 4:00 p.m. we were ready to go with a tri-band beam on a thirty foot tower and an 80 meter dipole strung through the trees.

Although not quite as gung ho as some of the other stations on the air, we did keep W1TKZ on the air around the clock. The need to take the antennas down in daylight did force us to end somewhat earlier than the actual conclusion of the contest however but we still had plenty of hours of air time.

We had a good crowd of people throughout the weekend so many people got a chance to make at least a few contacts. For those who were not on the air, the all night movie theater and snack bar was open in the big meeting room.

Our goal once again this year was to break 200 QSOs and we did that, coming up with 208 (after duplicates, etc.) in 58 ARRL sections all across the country.

The participants in this years Sweepstakes operation include: Tom Kinahan, N1CPE; Skid Schermerhorn, W1TTY; Mort Cohan, KA1IU; Ken McNair, N1DEZ; Bill Hanlon, N1ADY; C.J. McDonald, WB1BUM; Gary Weissel, KA1JWE; John Antes, KB1EB; Allan Bacon, K1BA; Mike Kiron, N1CGF; Scott Nacey, WA1YOJ; Nels Anderson, K1UR.

ANNOUNCEMENT

For the first time in memory. we will be having a regular club meeting in December. on the 6th. You've seen the many photos and heard the story second hand, but now you will have a chance to hear the story of STS-9 right from the source. For our program, we will have a videotape done by Owen Garriott, W5LFL, describing first hand his experiences as the first ham in space. Though this sort of thing may become common in the future. with at least one such flight scheduled for 1985, this one was the first and still the only. So, come on out December 6 for this program and our last meeting of the year.

MEETINGS THIS MONTH:

December 6, 1984, at 7:30 p.m.

211 Washington St., Wellesley

OFFICIAL BULLETIN

Number 102, dated November 8, 1984:

FCC has granted an ARRL request for an extension of comment time on PRB 1, ARRL's request for a declatory ruling preempting local zoning bodies from enacting overly restrictive antenna ordinances. The new deadline for filing is December 24. The League's comments are available from ARRL Hq for an SASE with 88 cent postage. Ask for PRB 1 material. Send one original and four copies of your comments to the Secretary, FCC, Washington, D.C. 20554. The first page of your comments should include the heading "Comments in response to PRB 1."

Hamnews

Some background on the above Bulletin: Some communities require large initial and/or annual filing fees from hams wanting to erect or maintain an antenna. Some communities require hams to obtain written permission from all property owners within a specified distance from the hams property lines.

ARRL believes strongly that the Commission does have the legal right to take this small step and the legal competence to do it in such a way that it minimizes the number of antenna cases brought before our judicial system. Years of day-in-day-out dealings with hams confronted by unreasonable, tyranical local zoning bodies has proved to us beyond a shadow of doubt that Federal preemption is needed -- but it has not yet been fully demonstrated to the Commission. We urge you in the strongest manner possible to recount any antenna difficulties that you have had with local officials in your filings to the FCC.

The League's request carries with it some risk in that if the FCC denies that preemptive relief requested, it could embolden local municipalities to increase its regulatory pressure on Amateur Radio. At the same time, however, it has become clear that the present course of fighting antenna regulations in the courts has not gained us much ground. Litigation is time-consuming, expensive. and its legal effect can easily be limited to the facts surrounding the particular case. What we urgently need is for the FCC to act positively on PRB 1. The FCC should issue a declaratory ruling exercising its federal preemptive authority over any state or local regulation that precludes or significantly inhibits effective, reliable Amateur communications and which is not clearly necessary to insure the safety of the installation.

By the way, the National League of Cities has already filed comments against PRB 1. Among its points are the FCC doesn't have the authority to meddle in local zoning issues, that there is no need for preemption since anyone with a complaint can always go to court, and that if the FCC does have the preemptive authority, it nevertheless lacks the competence to do it in such a manner that would avoid lengthy court battles.

ARRL Letter, November 8, 1984

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Official Journal of the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society

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THE "SPARK GAP" IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE WELLESLEY AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY. ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO KEEP ITS MEMBERS ABREAST OF CURRENT HAPPENINGS, FCC RULES AND REGULATIONS CHANGES, AND TO LIST EQUIPMENT OFFERED FOR SALE OR TRADE BY MEMBERS. MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE "SPARK GAP" AND MAY SEND THEIR ARTICLES TO THE EDITOR. ITEMS PRINTED IN THE "SPARK GAP" MAY BE REPRINTED BY OTHER AMATEUR RADIO PUBLICATIONS PROVIDED THE AUTHOR AND THE "SPARK GAP" ARE GIVEN CREDIT.

THE WELLESLEY AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF AMATEUR RADIO THROUGH INSTRUCTION, FELLOWSHIP, DEMONSTRATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF PARTICIPATION. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY IS $8.00. THE CLUB YEAR RUNS SEPTEMBER 1 TO AUGUST 31. AMATEUR NOVICE AND GENERAL CLASSES ARE CONDUCTED REGULARLY AT NO COST. TO ENROLL IN A CLASS, OR GAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOCIETY IN GENERAL, WRITE:

THE WELLESLEY AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
211 WASHINGTON STREET
WELLESLEY HILLS, MASS. 02181

MINUTES

Meeting of November 1, 1984:

Meeting opened at 7:45 by K1UR.

Secretary's report accepted.

Treasurers report accepted.

It was noted that we received a letter of thanks for our part in the Wellesley Veterans Parade. It also noted that they wished our help again next year. There was also a plaque noting our support of the Parade.

We found that the present number of members who have paid dues for this year is 60.

It was proposed that we print more QSL cards with for Mt. Equinox, there was no objections.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. for a program on the North Texas Contest Club.

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Meeting of November 16, 1984:

Meeting opened at 7:40 by K1UR.

Secretary's report accepted, one dissenting vote.

Treasurer's report accepted, one dissenting vote.

As a side note, the secretary noted at least one member in a rather dissenting mode.

Repeater committee report: Any day we should have the NEW W.A.R.S. repeater!

Education report: 7 people in General class, K1TK teaches next class on December 5, December 12 class has possible guest speaker, December 19 class by K1BA.

Sweepstakes is this weekend. Set up begins at noon Saturday at the Red Cross.

The club is applying for an Employer Identification Number. This is in order that the treasurer does not have to pay the taxes on club interest.

The message fair was discussed. Still looking into possible sites.

The meeting was closed at 8:10 p.m. and a videotape on fox hunting in China was shown.

OFFICIAL BULLETIN

Number 107, dated November 20, 1984:

The ARRL Committee of Tellers met today to count ballots in the elections just concluded for Director and Vice Director. The number of votes credited to each candidate is as follows. The first listed candidate is declared elected for the next term of office...

New England Division for Director:
Thomas Frenaye, K1KI, 2752
John C. Sullivan, W1HHR, 1398

...The new Directors and Vice Directors take office starting January 1. 1985. On that date the following candidates, previously declared elected, also take office for two year terms...New England Division Vice Director Richard P. Beebe, K1PAD...

"New Tickets"

The last ever FCC-administered Amateur Radio exams brought sucess to two of our club members. Congratulations to Thomas Burton, N1BCQ, who after many months of study passed his Amateur Extra exam in early November. Also to be congratulated on passing his Amateur Extra is Pete Bradley, N1ADX. Pete has been busy on other things as well, having just completed his PhD in biology at W.P.I. He will now be moving on to Northeastern University as a Research Associate.

It Seems to Me...

by WOHKF
from Ground Wave, via ARNS

For a long time the word "radio" was used to evoke feelings of awe and wonder in the reader, just as "computer" is nowadays. But, as a sign of the times, some manufacturers are beginning to disassociate themselves from the word. The Radio Corporation of America is now officially RCA--period! The Zenith Radio Corporation is now Zenith Corporation. Not everyone feels that way however, as the Emerson Radio Company still keeps its same old name as does, of course, Radio Shack. The Radio Shack has been with us a good deal longer than most radio club members have--the name came from Uncle Dave's Radio Shack in Boston, which began selling radio parts around 1933.

Hamnews

Following the tragic death of his mother Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, VU2RG, has been named Prime Minister of India, continuing the dynasty begun by his grandfather. A Telex message of condolence was sent to VU2RG:

"On behalf of Radio Amateurs of the World, wish to express our deepest sympathy on the tragic death of your mother. You are in our thoughts at this difficult time. [signed] Richard L. Baldwin, W1RU, President, International Amateur Radio Union."

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The FCC has granted the joint AMSAT/ARRL request for a special temporary authorization (STA) permitting operating automatic digital teleport stations. Teleports in this case act as automatic relay stations between packet radio networks on the ground and Amateur satellites in orbit. The FCC "concluded that the automatic relaying of digital messages between Amateur stations on earth and Amateur satellites via intermediary stations (stations in teleport operation) may contribute to the advancement of the technical and communication aspects of the art of radio."

ARRL Letter, November 8, 1984

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In a letter dated November 8, 1984, NASA Public Affairs Director Frank S. Johnson, Jr. informed ARRL President Larry Price, W4RA, and AMSAT President Tom Clark, W3IWI, of the acceptance of the joint proposal for Tony England to operate from space.

Although the letter states that flight 51-F is scheduled for April, long time NASA observers give little hope of that schedule being met. A problem with the protective tiles on the Challenger has thrown a monkey wrench into the entire shuttle schedule.

ARRL Letter, November 20, 1984

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An "editorial trip" is being made through Part 97 of the FCC rules. For one thing, the present lists of privileges for Extra and Advanced class licensees will be replaced by a chart which will also relate privileges to the ITU Region a U.S. Amateur finds himself in. References to earlier license classes (e.g., Class A, Class B, Class C and Conditional) will be purged. The editing is expected to be made official by a straight Order of the Commission.

ARRL Letter, November 20, 1984